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P O E M S



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# POEMS

BY

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JOHN LANE, THE BODLEY HEAD  
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# ROMANCES

B

*Three of the four partners in the  
firm of *Frederick, Gurney & Co.* are  
the editors of "The British Weekly."*

## THE BRIDE

All veiled in white and silver  
She trod the kirkyard way ;  
On either side her splendour  
The dead undazzled lay.

The bridal men and maidens  
Fell dreaming as they came ;  
The bridegroom's eyes upon her  
Were fantasy and flame.

Oh ! like some strange dead woman's  
Carved on a heathen gem,—  
A great sweet star of evil,  
Her beauty lighted them.

So, veiled and mute, she glittered  
Adown the dead;—and knew  
That o'er her last best lover  
The red red roses grew.

## A SONG OF GOLD

THERE was a Nun within a white

Fantastic town of Spain ;

Her hair was golden, like delight,

Her eyes were dark, like pain.

And once, without, amid the dew,

Splendid and unafraid,

One sang, the dead-gold twilight through,

An angry serenade.

“ O Sweet, now are you dreaming of

That Spring we kept of old,

When you fled fast with falconer Love

In virgin green and gold ?

Do you remember, Heart-alone,  
That carnival untold  
You flickered through like Passion's own,  
In scarlet and in gold?

Do you remember, Penitent,  
(O crucified long-cold!)  
The great white night before the Lent,  
The night of white and gold?"

## THE QUEEN

THE Queen sinned in a dream,

Never a word she spoke ;

But throned in reverie supreme

She sat amid her folk.

And yet a rumour ran

Through the Castle by the sea ;

The knights grew pale ; the maidens 'gan

To brood right rosily.

Was it the purple dyes

Dropped from the splendid wing

Of Love-o'-Dreams in her sleeping eyes,

That told the grim old King ?

Merciful was the King.

Sing therefore piteously  
A mass for the Queen of pearl we bring  
To the Chapel by the sea.

(*A tender and sparkling sky,*  
*Beautiful beryl-green!—*  
*Now Love-o'-Dreams may kiss for aye*  
*The great gold curls of the Queen.*

## DIALOGUE

### I.

*Ghost Without* : Dost thou remember ?

Thy window-pane is lit ;  
What music under it  
Stings thro' the wind and rain ?

*She Within* : Oh ! Clad in cloth-of-gold,  
Crowned like a queen of old,  
Have I to do with pain ?

Why should I remember ?

### II.

*Ghost* : Dost thou remember ?

For it is All Souls' Eve,  
Poor soul that could not cleave,  
Poor craven Convertite.—

*She:* Ah ! Here the Bridegroom's kiss,  
Perfume of ambergris,  
Braziers of silver light !  
Why should I remember ?

## III.

*Ghōrī:* Dost thou remember  
No colour of the Past ?—  
*She:* Its beauty hath me fast,  
Beneath mine eyes quaint kohl,  
Far sound of silver bells  
Within my voice of spells,  
Faint sweetness in my soul,  
It is. Do I remember ?

## IV.

*Ghōrī:* Dost thou remember  
The love, the pain, the sin ?—

*She :*      O far-off violin,  
                  Spare now to vex and pierce.  
  
What epithalamies  
Of mockery are these?  
  
*His* eyes are kind as tears.  
  
I will not remember!

## V.

*Ghost :* Dost thou remember  
The long strange kisses given  
Beneath a rose-pale heaven?—  
  
*She :*      My mouth is purple yet,  
Like to a grape new-pressed,  
A wound upon the breast.—  
  
How then may I forget?  
  
And so I must remember!

## VI.

*Ghost:* Dost thou remember  
The glory and the guilt,  
The magic moonlight spilt  
Between the aspens wet?—

*She:* Out to the rain and wind  
I come, for I can find  
No place where to forget.  
God, how I remember!

## ASLEEP

THE waxen taper faintly gleamed,  
And waxen-white she lay  
Upon her silken bed, and dreamed,—  
Dreamed of her wedding-day.

Her hand upon a scroll was cast,  
Where it was writ in red:  
“ *Each lover-errant holds at last  
His lady’s golden head.*”

But, bowed as one that sorroweth,  
The sombre Nympholept,  
The Lover of the Virgins,—Death  
His quiet vigil kept.

## THE DAUGHTER OF HERODIAS

The Daughter of Herodias,

She danced before the king :

That rain of ecstasy she was

Whose silver and fantastic feet

Flash down the ways of Spring.

The Daughter of Herodias,

Magician loveliest !

What music clav'd unto her, — as

A star within her love-locks sweet,

A heart upon her breast !

The Daughter of Herodias,

Like waves before the moon,

Like ringing rings a dreamer has

Lifted to a lay of water-folk,

Swayed gently to the tune.

The Daughter of Herodias,

She danced in gold and red

Upon the floors of chrysophras : —

The light of flaming cities broke

Behind her sumptuous head.

The Daughter of Herodias,

Resplendent, unappalled,

Wove such a spell, it came to pass

She drew the soul down sounding seas

Of pearl and emerald.

O Daughter of Herodias,

What horror of the deep,

What slime of impure things !—Alas !

What loathing loathed captivities

In that abysmal sleep !

## HIDDEN

THREE nuns at owl-call

Tell o'er their rosaries:

But dreams they drop where prayers must fall,

And so, not theirs the Peace!

Calm leagues of silver sand

Beside the convent lie:

The great grey waters builded stand

Against a great grey sky.

Beyond the bastioned sea,

Amid a prick of spears,

Through almond groves ride wearily

Three golden cavaliers,

Ever the life uncrowned !

Never the seal of fire !

Nor marriage-music surging round

The Heart and her Desire !

O red wild-roses, be

Mourners awhile for these !

Hidden roses, white and three,

Die by the Virgin's knees.

## PILGRIM SONG

GIRDLES of gold and of gramanaye

My lady's bosom clip.

And so I tread this aching way,

Dead roses in my scrip.

Her head was like Aldeboran,

(O Christ, that Star is set!)

Her voice was a spell Anatolia,

(But shall I not forget?)

## ARTHURIAN SONGS

### I. AVALON

*King Arthur lies alone*

*Deep down in Avalon.*

*Alone ! For what fair knight*

*Is loyal quite ?*

Could golden Pelleas be lain

To drowse between delight and pain ?

Could Tristram's musique here be borne,

Or the great blast of Gawain's horn ?

It is no land for Galahad

Where none are good and none are bad.

It is no land for Lancelot  
Where sweet and bitter are forgot.

For that proud soul of Guenevere's,  
And her long ransom of bright tears

It is no land,—where none may weep,  
Between reveille and faint sleep.

Swung soft 'twixt heaven and hell, it seems  
A crystal in a cloud of dreams.

Yet doth some one pass that way,  
Is it, is it Morgan la Faye?—

Saying: "Was it love or hate?"  
Saying: "But the world is great."

So, amid the poppies white,  
Lie, not Arthur, King and Knight,

*King Arthur lies alone,*

*Deep down in Avalon.*

*Alone ! For what fair knight*

*Is loyal quite ?*

## II. THE END

"Now leave we Queen Guenevere in Ayn ~~for~~, that  
will run in white clothes and in black."

*Morte d'Arthur.*

QUEEN GENEVERE a-maying rode

In green and gold, alack!

Queen Guenevere God's vassal died

In white clothes and in black.

In gold and green I follow her;

Nor God will call me back.

For I shall die in Aymesbury,

In white clothes and in black.

## III. SARRAS

"But yet hast thou not seen it [the Grail] openly as thou shalt see it in the city of Sarras, in the Spiritual Place."

*Morte d'Arthur.*

FAR in the Town of Sarras,  
Red-rose the gloamings fall,  
For in her heart of wonder  
Flames the Sangréal.

The gleaming fosses ring her,  
Haut dreams her turrets are.  
She riseth o'er the desert  
Like the great Magian Star.

Through the o'er-castled portals  
The knights ride out and in ;  
Their tired sweet heads all drooping,  
They pray away their sin.

Upon the carven causeway  
Pass damozels in vair  
And samite dropped with flamelets,  
Crowned on their ashen hair.

Into the Town of Sarras,  
Most delicate and sad,  
Like a measure of rare music  
Came Lord Galahad.

The Crown of Gold he beareth,  
A dream-king exquisite,  
Till the fair Lord of Heaven  
Yet closer needs his knight.

• • • •  
Dreams of the Town of Sarras,  
Ye ever give me dole,  
With dome and steeple staining  
Horizons of my soul !

But where the Grail-Knight entered,

Ah ! me ! I enter not,

For hard my spirit follows

The ways of Launcelot.

By ruined cross and chapel

I lie in shameful trance.

Within, the High Masque burneth,

The Saving Cup, the Lance.—

Home to the Bower of Roses,

The viols calling clear,

To Love's most perfect Lover !

Oh ! Home to Guenevere.

## IV. GUENEVERE

God rest the Lady Guenevere,

For much hath He required.

God rest the Lady Guenevere,

For surely she is tired,

If, in the hidden rosery

It was so white and red,

Was it not grey in Aymesbury

Till the bells rang her dead?

God rest her eyes, wheron Love wrote

His golden Masque, until

The vision of the Doomsday smote

And smouldered loner still.

God rest her weary golden head,

For it was fair to see !

The queen of lovers, she is dead,

And for her soul pray we.

## THE KNIGHTS AT RINGSTEAD

### I. REGRET

[*Of a Knight whose Lady died before he knew his  
love for her.*]

How was I to know  
When you lived, long ago,  
The sorcery in you, — that you could be,  
Once dead, a white magician wasting me  
From flaming crucibles of weary spells?

And, was I to know  
I could be plagued so  
By those tired hands, like lilies white and cold,  
That flowered from out your falling sleeves of gold;  
With a desire accurst for them I thirst,

Ah ! Was I to know,  
Of all fantastic woe,  
Your russet hair was of the hue to stain  
For ever the long night of dreams ? What pain  
That constellation dyes through the pale skies !

Nay ! And I did not know  
When, mid the tall flambeaux,  
On the great catafalque, sad state you kept,  
That round your brows, a flickering lustre, crept  
To be your aureole,—my dying soul.

Alas ! I did not know,  
Who lightly let you go,  
That Death would be a mirror to show clear  
The miracle that blinded me too near.—  
With masque and madrigal I paid you all.

Therefore, now, now I know  
I should have loved you.—Oh!  
I lost with you all music, valour, light  
Of things immortal. To the baffled knight  
“Rot on,” God saith, “within the fess of Death.”

## II. THE KNIGHTS TO CHRYSOLA.

WE crazed for you, aspired and fell for you;

Over us trod Desire, with feet of fire.

Ah! the sad stories we would tell for you,

Full of dark nights and sighing,

While—you were dying,

Chrysola!

Rondels and all rich rimes we rang for you;

How from the plangent lyre pled our Desire!

But the musicians vainly sang for you,—

Though dear the music, crying

That,—you were dying,

Chrysola!

High on the golden throne Love wrought for you,

With eyes enthralled of rest, tired of our best,

You sat unheeding while we fought for you,

Glaive unto glaive replying;

For,—you were dying,

Chrysola!

Frenzied from out the jets we came to you,

“Can we love more, Dream-fast?—Crown, then,  
at last.”

But love and hate were one dim flame to you:

Strange things you smiled us,—dying.

Oh! You were dying,

Chrysola!

Great spoils of frankincense we burned for you

Round your death-chamber proud,—then cursed  
aloud

Christian or Pagan god that yearned for you

Till you were undenyng.—

O Dream undyng,

Chrysola!

## III. WINTER

[*Of a Knight that wronged his Lady.*]

Over the snow,  
A frozen barefoot penitent I go.  
For, as I soil this cloth-of-silver, so  
I left strange traces in her soul of snow.

Thorough the snow,  
A monk distraught with subtle dreams, I go.  
The falling flakes confuse me. Even so  
My blinding love fell on her lids of snow.

Under the snow,  
The kindly snows of death are hid, I know,  
Her ruined lilies. --God, be mine the woe !  
My sins are scarlet. She was white as snow.

IV. THE KNIGHT BEAUCLERC TO THE LADY  
GLORIA

## I.

WHEN that the Queen with all her maids came  
singing,

Across the daisies, through a dusk of May,

Their spools of fairy gold and silver braiding,

You ran no clime in that sweet roundelay:

But hold yourself a little way apart,

Your hands above your heart,—

A fair full image robed in royal state,

Dreaming of splendours incident and a fit,

Dreaming of crown to wear,

Although your drooping head could hardly bear

Its crown-imperial of yellow hair.

## II.

Crowns, crowns of tournaments to lay before you !

What was a wistful singer to your pride,

A clerkly dreamer-Knight ? Ah, to adore you,

I gripped the lance, and threw the pen aside.—

But oh ! the crown of song is loveliest.

Yea ! I have loved you best,—

Crowned you in dreams with faint white stars of

glory,

Kisses imagined from all antique story ;

—But you as bindweed hold

My rare dream-jasmine. You would circlets cold

Of wounding laurel and of bruising gold.

## III.

Therefore I lie here vanquished. Let the victor  
Carry the crown before your red-shod feet:  
Love is a cruel god,—hath many a lictor  
To scourge with brier who found the Rose too  
sweet.

You ring of hard bright faces hem me in,  
Branding like bitter sin:  
Your fleshies like a jewel, — crowned, unsated,  
My bane you bemoan. Thus, then, we're fated,  
O off'lynden break!

And yet the crown of love is forlast.  
Farewell! Farewell! But I have left you  
last.

# DEVOTIONAL



## THE COMMON PRAYER

O HEAR the secret word I cannot say,  
And comprehend the prayer I cannot pray ;  
Read Thou the broken poem of my pain,  
Divine the motive of my music vain,  
And know the colour never artist knew  
My crazy imageries yearn unto :—

O God, of Whom I am the clouded Gleam,  
Art Thou indeed the Dream I cannot dream ?

Then fall like sleep upon mine aching eyes,  
And hush my lips whose very truths are lies.

O Love and Lover, light this gloaming chill ;  
Say: “Throughly do I know thee. Peace, be still !”

## EARTHLY LOVE IS OFFERED TO GOD

BETTER to Thee the heart of heathen fire  
Than the sour wood that will not burn at all;  
More beautiful the feet that stray and tire  
Than those that shun both fast and festival.

Shepherd that lov'st the lost,  
The cold and laggard soul outwears Thee most.

Look in the wild eyes of this Pagan, — Love.

His feet are winged; they loathe the mortal dust.  
Not of Thy making, yet created of  
Beauty and music, splendour, pain, and trust,  
Vivid is he and strange,  
And with immortals only will he range.

Christen him to Thy Knighthood if Thou wilt :

Do on him the Archangel's mail and sword,

For on this earth they call his strangeness guilt.—

The starry essence brooks no flameless lord :

He kneels before Thy throne,

Thy vassal. Set his hands between Thine own.

## HYMN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

*Written during a foreboding of Calamity.*

THERE is a terror in my heart;

And the brown twilight is despair;

And there are echoes in my heart

That chime to yon great death-bell rung

Against an iron sky somewhere.

Yea, from the clouded height is flung

Into my holy horoscope,

Ruddy with love and white with hope,

A blazing demon star to-day,—

I will pray.

*Spirit of God, I cry to Thee,—*

*O Saviour Spirit, succour me.*

Oh! Far beyond the iron sky,  
The cruel gods, the Clouded Height,  
Evil and good and iron sky,  
Thou dwellest, Unimaginèd,  
In the last ecstasy of light.

But, when the bitter Doom is sped,  
Thy Passion strikes the spaces through;  
Our silver sword and buckler too,  
Our silver dragon-crest art thou!—  
Now, oh, now,

*Spirit of God, I cry to thee,*  
*O Silver Spirit, strengthen me.*

The bats are winging, bodied fears !  
'Tis on the Clouded Height decreed  
I be the plaything of the spears  
Of the Dark Legion. I must go

To meet the tortures that exceed,  
And all my soul is burning low;  
My javelins, my dreams are lost,  
How can I treat the evil host?

Lord of the Silver Forges, smite  
The anvil white,

*Fashion my armor for I lie,  
Spirit of God, thy bright am I.*

## FLAGELLANTS

### I.

THE Soul is bleeding in Thy sight,

O Jesu ; and the Body must.

Shall the slave dance in red and white,

The Queen lie naked in the dust ?

We sought Thee West and East ; we ran

To painted palaces. Oh ! Vain !

Thou callest, sad sweet Castellan,

Up to thy dim-gold keep of pain.

(*Lift up the gates, the flaming gates,*

*With martyrdoms and flickering fates*

*Wrought over. Shall we dare to flee*

*The Fortress where Thou lov'st to be ?*)

## II.

Our lips are saffron, subtly kist  
 Or Pagan love; our fingers fine  
 All arts and spells and tortures wiste;  
 They drove the dagger, drugged the wine.  
 Our feet have trod the Venus-hill,  
 Our brow up 'n her breast have lain.  
 Oh! Plague our fair soled bodies, till  
 Their sins are all outburned by pain.

*Death of the Body-worm,—*

*A dead worm, none to tell!*  
*Our Saxon and bitter worm,*  
*As we are now, must talk no more!*

## III.

The flood's that once Thy city cover'd  
 Shall cover and cleave with iron bands

Love's darling arms: our curled soft hair

With all the Passion-thorns be crowned.

An evil madrigal, our sin

Still vexed Thee. Hark the new refrain  
Of falling tears, for we begin

To ransom peace with pain, with pain.

(*While beautiful boy-seraphs sing,*

*Their fingers on the muted string,*

*With dream-pale faces, listening eyes,*

*Beneath the trees of Paradise.*)

#### IV.

Ah! How we seek and cannot find!

Only a colour,—broken light—

A scent of sorrow down the wind,

A wilding savour through the night!

Nay! Not amid the roses, Christ,  
That wound and stain, that haunt and stain!  
The Soul must keep her bridal tryst  
Mid the great liljes charmed from pain.

(*Then in that awful Place and pure,  
The twinkling of the Night Obscure,—  
How like strayed tapers will be this Past  
That Thou shalt kiss away at last!*)

## V.

Lead, crimson gondola! Thus  
We mount and perish, yet aspire.  
Bans, pointed tapers, lighting us  
Unto the Darkness we desire.  
O Passion of the Pardon!—Such  
Breaks, the Soul's breaking free.

Like rent red raiment casting by

The body, she escapes to Thee.

*(As a great sword the sheath forsakes,*

*As flame from lighted incense wakes,*

*The Sleeper sloughs her wasting dream.—*

*O Love Supreme, O Love Supreme !)*

## THE VANITY OF VOWS

A girl of many longings entered late  
A chapel like a jewel blazing bright,  
And fell up on the altar-steps. All night  
She held with hopes and woesies debate ;  
With tears the litanies I passionately  
Drenched her, transparent colours burned her  
white,  
And, as the incense flamed in silver light,  
God called her to His own infinite.

And then, because her eyes were charmed with

Love,

And moved by the star new-born within  
The glow-tide God's dream half-creed,—  
Now in that House of Ecstasies

He was to take up his state of saincy

And, as he did, he took up, he was dead.

## THE END OF THE WAY

MUCH have I seen by the winding way ;

And much have I desired.

What is the end of it all to-day ?—

*Jesu, I am tired !*

I met with Love amid the dew ;

At noon with Shame and Wrath ;—

At sunset those three gibbets threw

Their shadows on my path.

No beauty can I bear to see.

Too much have I desired.

Here is a wayside Calvary !

*Jesu, I am tired.*

## AN EARLY CHRISTIAN

GIRT in the panther-fells,

Violets in my hair,

Down I ran through the woody dells,

Through the morning wild and fair,—

To sit by the road till the sun was high,

That I might see some god pass by.

Fluting amid the thyme

I dreamed through the green bry,

Callin' through a melody and thine,

“Iacchus! Come this way,—

From harrowin’ Hades like a king,

Vine leaves and lotus scatterin’.”

Twilight was all rose-red,  
When, crowned with vine and thorn,  
Came a stranger god from out the dead ;  
And his hands and feet were torn.

I knew Him not, for He came alone :  
I knew Him not, whom I fain had known.

He said : " For love, for love,  
I wear the vine and thorn."

He said : " For love, for love,  
My hands and feet were torn :  
For love, the winepress Death I trod."

And I cried in pain : " O Lord my God!"

## AVE MARIA

AVE, MARIA ! I am tired.

Maiden Mother, reach thine hand :

Thou alone wilt understand

What it is to be so tired.

Let the virgin, sick for rest,

Like a pierced and hunted deer,

Find a still sweet covert here,

At thy feet, O Queen of Rest.

Earthly pains are hard to bear,

Earthly joys as hard, in truth.

Even Love bath' bards uncouth

When the soul no more will bear.

Only thine are delicate  
On the spirit's broken wing.  
Oh! the languor of our Spring,  
Oh! the heavy dreams that sate !

Ave, Maria ! I am tired.  
Maiden Mother, cover me.  
Thou dost keep in memory  
What it is to be so tired.

## PILGRIMS

*The Clerks.*

THE pages of the perfect Greek,  
And all our lovely heathen lore,  
Our pastorals, and gods antique,—  
We burned them, which we did adore.

Pilatus wrote, that all may read  
Thy Name above the Cross indeed.  
(O hard behest!—Thy Words are best.  
But Jesu! help us to forget !)

*The Knights.*

We have cast off the subtle mail  
And broken with our bride the sword.

From sins of violence we quail  
As caitiffs for Thy sake, sweet Lord,—  
Far from the golden great mellay  
That ringeth like a morn of May.  
(O sword and crest!—Thy Will is best !  
But, Jesu ! help us to forget !)

*The Ladies.*

We left the lute with broken string,  
The web of tapestry undone,  
The falcon with his wearied wing,  
The lilies fainting in the sun,—  
The web of dreamy scarlet dyes,  
The falcon Love far-off that dies.  
(O beating breast!—Thy Love is best !  
But Jesu ! help us to forget !)

*The Monk.*

Across the litanies there came  
A dream of oriflammes and spears :  
Within the vigil woke like flame  
A dream of kisses and of tears.  
The body for the Soul we slew,  
But Love and Wrath like souls shone through  
The cloister bars. Those flagrant stars  
O Jesu! help us to forget!

*All together.*

Now over all the low blue hills  
Winds on the masque of Spring :  
Green, gold, and white upon the hills  
The Paynim masque of Spring !  
Of all the buried dales

Not one hath she forgot :  
But us she quickeneth not.

Us she reneweth not, albeit  
Amid her revelry  
But yester-April, fair and fleet,  
Her masquers too were we,—  
Singing that we were hers,  
Not children of the Curse.

But children we of very Death  
Unless Thou quicken us :  
And so we draw this bitter breath,  
And so we travail thus.  
For like a wind Thy Spirit saith  
O'er pipe and violin :  
“ It is but shame and sin.”

Mile after mile the road crawls by,

But are we nearer Thee ?

Against what holy beryl sky

Shall rise the Crosses three ?

When shall Thy beauty like a sigh

Cleanse us from vain-regret ?

When shall we quite forget ?

## ROSA MUNDI

THE Rose of the World hangs high on a thorny  
Tree.

Whoso would gather must harrow his hands and  
feet.

But oh ! It is sweet.

The leaves that drop like blood from the thorny  
Tree

Redden the roads of the earth from East to West.

They lie in my breast.

O Rose, O Rose of the World, bow down to me  
Who can cleave no more, so pierced are my hands  
and feet.

For oh ! Thou art sweet.

## PURIFICATION

I WOULD go down to meet the infinite sea,  
And give my body to the sharp salt wave,  
That it might seize, and sting, and harry me,  
And dash me lifeless in a lifeless cave,  
And there for ever dream against my side,—  
O God, O God, so I were purified!

Would I might marry me to subtle flame  
Till eyes and lips were merely ashes white,  
Till with the human passed the human shame  
Of sordid pain and undivine delight,—  
Would all strange tortures bind my soul for bride,  
O God, O God, so I were purified!

When I draw round my flesh the veils of death,  
Soaked with the mist of twilight thro' and thro',  
When to the burning blood there entereth  
The solace of imperishable dew ;  
When I go out into Thy dusk to hide,  
O God, O God, shall I be purified ?

## LOVE SPEAKETH

WHY hast Thou given me these gyves to bear,  
And why this garment of white flame to wear ?  
Anhungered for immortal beauty, must  
I feed my longing on this burning dust ?  
Loving the lilies, mid the tares I go,—  
Why dost Thou plague Thy dearest angel so ?  
Cast in Thine image, moulded likest Thee,  
Thy donzellon, Thy troubadour to be,  
The dreamer of the rapture at the core  
Of Thine own heart, — Oh ! who, then, can dare  
Must I pollute my fantasy unwear,  
With strange dimmings — Love the Sannambulist,

Driven to sacrilege on mine adored?—

It is not well, it is not well, O Lord!

I yearn to Thee from out the blinding sands;

And lo! Thy stigmata upon mine hands.

Yet, as I pray, my feet take hold on hell.

It is not well, O Lord, it is not well!

## AN ART-LOVER TO CHRIST

(*Towards the End of the Ages of Faith.*)

If these I love, what love have I for Thee,  
Since in her treasures the heart will be?  
Some, it may be, shall triumph, strong to seek  
And find both these and Thee. But I am weak.  
Unto mine idols am I wedded fast ;  
And with them would I perish at the last.

(O beauty of great colour, great desire ,  
Great throes of music, clangour of great spires,  
Mystical marvel of great verse, great diction  
Of carven faces, and O thou supreme

Beauty of perfect love, the perfect art,—  
Ye do consume with ecstasy mine heart.  
God's images?—Nay, for your only sake  
I flower and fade, labour and dream and wake.)

Not Thee and these! Thou art too great and sweet  
To brook a cloven worship at Thy feet.  
I do not murmur. Fold Thy lovers, Thou,  
In Thy blue Arcady. But here and now  
I gather all the joy of Paradise  
With faint adoring hands, and soft stilled eyes.

These perish; Thou endurest?—Even so.  
All perishing things are loveliest, I know.  
The Music these, the fainting Echo I,—  
Rather than live with Thee, with them I die!  
Nor shall thine angry trumpets rend that rest,  
For Thou art noble; and I love Them best.

## CALVARY

### I.

FAINT incense from the lily goes;

(O Calvary, O Calvary !)

Red, red as blood the drifted rose.

(O Calvary !)

I wove a glory for mine head ;

The wind's great wings came sweeping by ;—  
And lo ! a crown of thorns instead !

What old old dream dream I ?

### II.

Over the Field of Cloth of Gold

(O Calvary, O Calvary !)

Love leads rare queens and soldiers bold,

(O Calvary !)

A tyrannous white god is he,  
And yet sometimes his eyes are wet :  
Then murmur I : "Can these things be?  
Hast *Thou* seen Olivet ?"

## III.

I hear a chime of wistful bells.

(O Calvary, O Calvary !)

I have sung all my canticles :

(O Calvary !)

And there is One that calleth me

From Calvary.

The masques and dances hurt mine eyes ;

I feel the dream behind them all ;

My rondels all ring round to sighs,

And oh ! for evenfall !

(And where is Calvary ?)



# CHANT D'AMOUR



## DESIRE

WHY do I call thee? Hear the Darkness calling  
All the wild gold plumage of the sky,—  
Flickering and flaming, softly, softly falling  
To the Western dove-cote, dusk and shy.  
  
With a voice of viols, hear the Darkness calling!  
So my soul is yearning, tyrannous and tender;  
Hear the Darkness calling, O thou poignant  
splendour!—  
  
It is I.

Why do I love thee?—Hearken Death desiring  
All the yellow roses, loth to die,  
All the lovely lovers and their loves untiring,  
All the days of lapis-lazuli,

All the chiming rondels.—Hearken Death desiring  
So in silver samite like a bride to fold thee,  
So to hush thee, hide thee, so to have and hold  
thee.—

It is I.

## MONODY

### I.

ART thou so sad, sweet Soul,—  
Sad with the sadness of narcissus pale,  
Whose delicate odours lingeringly exhale  
By rare brown pools the green-blue birches veil,  
Sad with the sadness, Love, of souls too pure  
Their own consuming beauty to endure,—  
Art thou so sad, sweet Soul?

### II.

Love me, too-perfect Soul !  
For such as thou, stooping to love of me  
Surely a fault, a recklessness will be  
To check thy fatal flame of purity,—  
And yet a fault the gods may well forgive.  
For this,—for any reason,—let me live,—  
O love me, perfect Soul !

## LOVE'S HUMILITIES

To think of thee, to think of thee !  
O privilege too pure for me !—  
Though I could part the sacred veil  
Within my soul, and show thee pale  
Against a golden light,  
With long hands folded on thy breast,  
Like some Madonna, drawn to rest  
Upthrough a jasper night.

To dream of thee, to dream of thee !  
O sweetness far too sweet for me !  
To seek thy bosom like a dove,  
To cling about thy feet like love,

What earthly dream shall dare ?  
Let mine but hear the cushion call  
Through rosaries thy faint foot-fall  
Hath silenced, like a prayer.

To think of thee, to dream of thee !  
O ecstasy too rare for me !—  
Nay ! Thou art but a colour through  
All fantasies I ever knew,  
Love, Love !—Or wilt thou be  
An odour of hid lilies in  
All dells of reverie I win ?—  
O Sweet, suffice it thee !

## ORA PRO ME

O PRAY for me ! Lo, here thy lover lies !

O pray for me !

Remember me, O strange ecstatic eyes,

And pray for me !

Beneath thy nimbus of sacerdotal gold,

Lifted aspirant face, O pray for me !

Ye long white pointed hands I yearned to hold

Against my breaking heart, implore for me,—

For me.

Then as I lie swathed in my waiting dream

(Unransomed yet !)

The colour and music of the Past shall seem

(O all regret !)

The great rose-window in a kirk of rest,  
Where in a circumflagrant fantasy  
Of rose and gold and green, thou flowerest,  
To pray for all sick souls, to pray for me—  
For me.

## SURRENDER

I STROVE, and strove with Fate. I leave my throne  
Of proud virginity, pearl-pale, apart,  
Where I have loved to sit and hark alone  
The dim pure pulses of my dreaming heart.  
Behold! most impotent kisses must I rain  
From lips for Death kept sweet  
On thine indifferent feet  
That yearn away to some strange laurelled goal.  
Oh! She is fallen, yea, and fallen in vain,—  
My once-imperial Soul!

## “THE WATER O’ WEARY WELL”

“WHERE have you been, sweetheart, sweetheart,  
since clang of twilight bell?”

—“A weary, weary pilgrimage, to the Water o’  
Weary Well.”

“Now, what so crazed your silken feet, your sumptuous eyes, my bride?”

—“The craving of a dreamer’s heart, outraged and crucified.”

“Were not my kisses charm enough to keep your eyelids down?”

—“Nay!—Tho’ they sandalled sweet my feet, and bright my brows did crown.”

"I would the feet I sandalled so a sweeter way had  
trod!"

—"And yet it was your love of loves compelled me  
to the road."

"Where did you pause, you wayward child, upon  
the journey vain?"

—"By the dim Loch of Tears unwept, by the  
Standing Stones of Pain."

"What did you at the Weary Well, your travail  
quite fulfilled?"

—"I stooped, and drank so bitterly, and rose,—  
and I was stilled."

"O let me lay you in my breast, and hush away  
your pain."

—"And I was stilled, mine ancient Love; I shall  
not ache again."

"O Love, Love, Love, but yester-eve I plucked  
your rose supreme."

—"Oh! years on years ago it was,—or verily a  
dream!"

## UNREALISED

Nor yet, not yet, Beloved !  
A delicate sad kiss in passing by,  
Dropt sprays of lily, and a wandering sigh !

Forget, forget, Beloved,  
That Love has might desirable but this,—  
The wistful kiss, the long sigh, the kiss.  
Ah, Sweet,—could Love give much more strange  
than this ?

Not yet, not yet, no Dream !  
Only a wistful, delicate, a faint kiss !  
The Love I have is worth more than this,  
Forget, forget, my Dream.

## A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN TO HER LOVER

WHEN my heart breaketh with felicity,  
When Love hath overstrung his lute, and when  
Thy dear, dear hands and delicate I draw  
Upon my flickering eyelids till I die ;—  
In olive, oak, nor cedar shut me in,  
Build me a sepulchre of saffron flame.

Ah ! shall my long fine fingers, made to play  
The king's own virginals, the king's own soul,  
My silk-shod feet that tread such measures out  
Over the crimson roses and the white,—  
O Love !—my lips, my sombre star-lit eyes,  
So sacro-sanct with kisses that transcend

All other miracles of life and death,  
By lewd and loathed and burrowing things be  
known?  
  
And shall the blindworm ravel and undo  
The love-spun web of that same sumptuous hair  
Thou crownest as with stars, I think? (Poor gold!  
It would the longest suffer all that wrong!)  
  
Shall nameless lives invade my regal peace,  
And play the courtesan—Oh! in my breast! —  
Thy garden to thee, Lord of the Lilies?—No!

While violin on violin laments,  
To fire resign me, beautiful, fierce, and pure,  
And fatal as a star, a sword, or Thoa.  
Burn me with amber, nard, and albanum  
And passionate myrrh. So, not akin to those  
Who agonise from out the clinging clay,

Yea, slowly writhe from the dim charnel-house,  
Clogged and impierced by memories obscene ;  
But sifted, plumed, aspirant, followed hard  
By great bright angels,—Flame, and Scent, and  
Sound,  
And Ecstasy, my phœnix soul must pass  
From Splendour to Splendour by the gates of fire.

• • • • •

Then in an antique ossuary shed  
The drifted dust,—then bow thine head, and cry :  
“ O Love I loved, farewell !  
Farewell, farewell, for evermore farewell !”

## MIDSUMMER EVE

LET Silence with her long pale hands ravish the  
violin:

Let Reverie with silken snare entoil the dancing  
foot!

Rumours of antique beauty, love o' stars, and shriven  
sin,

Die softly out from my tired soul! That I may  
rest, be mute!

That I may rest, be mute!

But let some faint and rhythmic voice intone me  
monkish tales

Of tears o' cult, and pang o' unendurable  
divorce,—

Alhambras rainbow-bright made sullen cloisters,—

scourges,—veils,—

The great white glimmering tomb of Love, the  
vigil of remorse.

Foretell the long remorse.

And oh ! ye lovely wasting eyes, let sleep blindfold  
you well !

Peace ! Peace ! Tyrannic heart, what more, what  
more to give have I ?

Yea ! tirèd through with love I am, for ever it befell  
That, married to immortal dreams, all mortal  
dreamers die :—

Of too much beauty die !

So, that some silver moons the more Love's torches  
flame for me,

Give me a night of Lotos. Let the great grey  
waters quite

Close over; and, because my soul has wrought my  
flesh to be

Like essence,—ghosts and fairies fine alone shall  
touch to-night.

Oh! Elfin hands to-night.

## LOVE'S FOOL TO HIS LADY

LOVE's Fool am I. To thine imperial court,  
All blue and gold, all music, masque, and sin,  
I bring the fool's own follies for thy sport,—  
Mad silver bells, a subtile mandolin  
To sting thy sated hours with quaint remorse,  
And sad fidelities to strew the course  
Like pansies, where thy perverse feet pass by.

Love's Fool am I.

Love's Fool am I. For I believe thee filled  
With loving-kindness, though my life is poured  
In blood and tears for thee ; and splendid-willed,  
And pure, albeit thou slayest as a sword.

Illusion is my livery?—What though?

Art thou not what I dream?—God meant thee so!

Fools overhear His sorrow, sigh on sigh,—

Love's Fool am I.

Love's Fool am I. Ah! if thy regal eyes

Drop me no love-stars, yet they shall be lit

With laughter all for me. Say not the wise

That Melancholy-mad hath rarest wit;

Then songs I'll sing thee, wrought with times

bizarre,

And all sweet lapses in crazed thought that are,

Till I surprise the tears that purity,

Love's Fool am I.

Love's Fool am I.—Shall not thy D—m'day break?

Shall not the golden dragons of thy stat-

Writhe in the dust ; and lovers all forsake,—

Yea, rend the purple from thy shoulders sweet,  
And drive thee to the desert. I alone,  
Oh ! I the Fool will follow thee, unknown,  
To kiss thy frantic fingers till thou die ;—  
Love's Fool am I.

## RENUNCIATION

On the lifted Rood thy Days have hewn,  
Sweet Soul, be crucified.

Yield the soft palm to the piercing nails  
And bare the beating side.

Now change thee the love-stars in thine eyes,  
And thy roses twined in vain,  
For the upward stare of agony,  
And the aubespine of pain.

O feet that sought the forest-paths  
Cross over patiently:  
O lips that the red red wines have stained  
Be moistened bitterly.

The moon and the stars the torches were  
To thy strange sweet mysteries ;  
And God was the Lord of thy wedding-feast,—  
For this, O Love, for this !

## LEFT IN LIFE

### I.

I would not have thee know the tears I weep,

The cold corroding vigils that I keep,

And the dim-scarlet fainting dreams of sleep,

I would not have thee know,

Like burning embers lie upon my breast

Those memories. Soon, soon (and it is best !)

The heart must flame and break.—Sweet be thy  
rest !

I would not have thee know,

How grace by grace my beauty wears away,

How daily deeper in the maky clay

Time tramples Love and me—I pray, I pray

That thou shalt never know.

## LEFT IN LIFE

### II.

It is a dream. What then? Are dreams untrue?  
Dreams were our angels when I walked by you.

It is a dream! But this is you, I know.  
O Love, Love, Love, how could you leave me so?  
  
A dream! But may I never lift my face  
From this undying passion of embrace!

Look how my robes are rended and unstarred.  
Yea! I am bleeding, trodden down, and marred.  
  
For since you went and left me all alone,  
Not one of all the world but casts a stone.

But fast my beauty flowers beneath this rain  
Of tender tears. I am a queen again.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Awake, awake! The great Dreamer stands,  
Pleased with thy fithy staining hands.*

## OUTWORN

BETWEEN the winds and the steady stars—

Are there no quiet ways

Where the soul may swoon to repose—

Through the dim, pure nights and the day—

Where never a sound or a stir can start,

Where never a man can weep,

Of the passion of tears and travail-pangs,

Of the love, and the pain, and sin?

## AN OCTOBER AFTERNOON

NEVER again

The world all gold,

Repured and cold,

And carved like a great brazen incense cup!

To gods of old

This rare barbaric perfume riseth up

Never again.

Never again

Yon sorceries

May burn the trees

That on the green horizon dream to death,

Rich tears like these

Upon your life, upon my lip each breath

Never again!

## THE SUPREME WISH

### I.

GOD give you joy, I said,—and joy you had.

But how the the dancing tired

Your subtile feet!—and from the pageant glad

Your eyes most uninspired

Wearily turned toward the wistful West:

So now, God give you rest.

### II.

God give you love, I said,—and love's delight

Deep-dyed your purple eyes:—

But now, vague Soul, that wanderest careless quite

Of where the censers rise,

With listless lips and hands, and flaming breast,—

I pray, God give you rest.

### III.

God give you rest, my queen. No earthly flowers

Upon that golden hair

Can lightly lie, no low love-song of ours

But tires you to despair.

God crown you softly with His Elies blest,

O Sweet, God give you rest !

## DEAD

### I.

If I hearken at your grave

Will you speak ?

Will the sudden crimson wave

Tint your cheek ?

Will your pulse begin to beat,

And your lip to quiver, sweet,

With the dreamy silver phrase

Of our dreamy lover-days,

If I speak ?

### II.

For your passion would embalm

(So you said)

Lids and fingers carven calm,

Pale and dead.

Like a sacred orange-flower,  
Pluckt one meditative hour,  
You would wait, a pensive bride,  
Till they brought me to your side,  
—So you said.

## III.

But I dare not hearken so,  
Queen of Rest !  
Where the holy lilies grow  
From your breast ;—  
For the silences immure  
All your reveries death-pure,  
While I sicken with the sin  
Of the world I wander in,  
Soul at rest !

## IV.

So I labour to forget

How the road

Wins through petals blue and wet

Your abode;—

How an agony supreme

Yet shall break your bridal dream,

When they bear my body stained

To your beauty unprofaned,

By that road.

## AUTUMN-SONG

THE roads are laid with cloth-of-gold ;  
And o'er the splendour, all alone,  
Clad fair in scarlet, like a king,  
Love cometh to his own.

A crown of thorns, a sceptral reed,  
The beauty of a flaming throne !  
From out the pleasant orchard-lands  
Love cometh to his own.

## SAINT MARY OF THE FLOWERS'

MEET me at Saint Mary of the Flowers'.

Art thou tired as I? At evenfall

Meet me at Saint Mary of the Flowers'.

Ringing ancient rimes the far bells call !

There we sundered. Folly infinite !

Ringing rimes of mercy, hear them call,

From a world of lilies red and white,

Once by legendary angels trod,—

(O my pain is red, my love is white !)

Towers like great sword-lilies up to God

Triumph. Lo ! Saint Mary of the Flowers',

All her spires uprising unto God !

Meet me at Saint Mary of the Flowers'.

Love is very great at evenfall:

Therefore meet me mid the abbey-flowers.

In the twilight Love remembers all.

Is God wroth with such a wasted day?

"Oh! the bleeding hearts!"—Forgive them all.

"Count their pangs, poor children!" Love will say.

All the West is dewy apple-green.

Pray a little; rise and come away.

Underneath the tender apple-green,

They shall bring us royally on biers:

They shall couch us like a king and queen.

Neither kisses, O my Love, nor tear

Shall we mingle in the Field of Flowers:

(O the olden kisses, and the tears!) □

Yet at sweet Saint Mary of the Flowers'

Subtly shall we be at one at last,

Resting at Saint Mary of the Flowers'.

Leave unto the locusts what is past.

Meet me at Saint Mary of the Flowers'.

## SPRING

Love, as the Resurrection Angel, goes

To the low Sepulchre one watcher knows,

"Of Easter-lilies I am lord!" Love saith,

"O Sleeper, I have ransomed thee from death,

"O Dreamer, she is very tired. Arise

And kiss the moist of weepin' from her eyes!"

But Love the Easter-Angel calls in vain,—

Vain, even thine own tears couldst not spell out

"I am dead, I am dead, I am dead, I am dead."

O Easter Angel! How I long to see

How I long to see thy face again,

For I am dead, I am dead, I am dead,

With all my heart I long to meet thee again.

## REQUIESCAT

I DIGGED thy grave in my memory  
Years ago,—oh! years ago!—  
And for oblivion over thee  
The poppies grow, the poppies grow.  
But still, when Hesperus is high,  
Pansies for thoughts I drop therby,  
And let them lie, and let them lie,  
Since from thy bitter I drew sweet.  
Yet are the pansies at thy feet,  
The pansies pale thy head above  
Not sown of Love, nor sown of Kind.

## FRAGMENT

LOVE hath fetters on his feet.—

Never speak of these.

Love must use h's knotted scourge,

Crouched upon his knees.

Let him alone. We must be still to-day.

Love is at penance. Go apart and pray.

## PREVISION

WHILE all the dancing days that pass

Take oath we cannot die,

Alas ! Alas ! green grows the grass

Whereunder you must lie.

A golden Knight, sans fear or peer,

Lord Love great challenge saith :—

The hooded year is moving near

That strikes my heart with death.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust !

O bitterness thereof !

The sons of Lust, they moulder. Must

So fare the sons of Love ?

## SLEEP-SONG

THE sunken bell is ringing up through the sea of sleep.

Ah! can you hear it,

And not fear it,

Mine own bright sea-bird winging down through the sea of sleep?

There's many a strange mermaiden beneath the sea of sleep;

And drowned white hands

Upon the sands,

And arrosies untaken beneath the sea of sleep.

But they that sink together down through the sea  
of sleep,

In one dream charmèd  
Lie unharmed.—

Love, if we sank together beneath the sea of sleep!

## THE WAITING ANGEL

WE are leaning through the roses  
Mid the thrill of the sweet closes  
    Of our tender violing.  
  
Up and down, up and down  
All the ways of our dream-town,  
    Round a dragon-crested King,  
Ride the noble knights of old,  
All in azure, green, and gold.  
  
WE two cast them our dream-roses  
Mid the sweetness of the closes  
    Of our tender violing.  
  
But I know, behind the star-lit  
Dusk of emerald, a scarlet

Strange Archangel brooding stands.  
Waiting still, waiting still,  
Gazing with a mournful will  
At the sword within his hands.  
Through the delicate green light  
Winds the Pomp of our delight:  
But I know behind the star-lit  
Dusk of emerald, a scarlet  
Angel lifts his armèd hands.

But when all the stars are weeping,  
When my Well-beloved lies sleeping  
Softly I shall rise and go.  
I shall wrestle with that dread  
Angel of the bended head.  
“ Death! Oh Death! Thy name I know.  
Mock me not that I am frail.

I am Love: I must prevail  
Here, where all the stars are weeping."  
When the Well-Beloved lies sleeping,  
Surely I shall rise and go.

## THE IMMORTAL HOUR

STILL as great waters lying in the West,

So is my spirit still.

I lay my folded hands within Thy breast,

My will within Thy will.

O Fortune, idle pedlar, pass me by.

O Death, keep far from me who cannot die.

The passion-flowers are lacing o'er the sill

Of my low door.—As dews their sweetness fill,

So do I rest in Thee.

It is mine hour. Let none set foot therein.

It is mine hour unflawed of pain or sin.

'Tis laid and steeped in silence, till it be

A solemn dazzling crystal, to outlast

And storm the eyes of poets when long-past

Is all the changing dream of Thee and Me.



# REVERIES



## SPRING

ROUND the green-kindling hawthorn hill,  
Upon the Path of Daffodil,  
Before the morning star was set,  
A pomp of grave Greek girls I met :  
And, like the florets of the Way,  
Of gleaming pearl and amber they  
Were wrought. Upon their bounden hair  
Pale urns of noble curve they bare.

“ Oh ! Whither ? ” said I, “ Wander ye,  
Most beautiful Canephori ?  
To what great Temple go ye up,  
Cupbearers of what mystic cup ?

For what sweet god has each gold head  
Its dainty curls white-filleted?  
What virgin pleasures do ye bring  
Unto the triumph of the Spring?"

One turned her head and answered me:  
"We know not what our burdens be,  
Nor to what temple go we up  
To pour strange wine from graven Cup;  
But the young god of our desire  
Shall draw our feet before they tire  
To His great House of gold and white  
Where all the rites are mere delight."

She spake. The frieze of daffodil,  
Of mingled flowers and maidens, still  
Girdled the glad white-flowering hill.

## THE HOSTEL OF SLEEP

'Tis the Hostel of Sleep. Come in, come in !

Are ye spent and bleeding and shamed and cold ?

Have they wronged you, Scholar?—Fair young  
Knight,

Are you quite despoiled of your arms of gold ?

Yet here is a mazer-cup for you,

And a great kind bed in the Chamber Blue.

'Tis the Hostel of Sleep. Come in, come in !

Ah ! There was many an ambush set !

Lover and foe they have hurt you sore.

Lover and foe shall you now forget,

For the moons and poppies woven through  
The arras rare of the Chamber Blue.

'Tis the Hostel of Sleep. Come in, come in!

Passionate Pilgrim, swooning-pale,  
Loose the fardel and kiss the Cup,  
For here is the end of every tale.  
Only the things of peace are true.  
There is fire on the hearth of the Chamber Blue.

'Tis the Hostel of Sleep. Come in, come in!

Strong it is like an olden keep:  
The Sign of the Star is over all,  
With the Water of Dreams it is moated deep:  
And the Host himself will warden you  
As you lie at rest in the Chamber Blue.

## TO FORTUNE

WHEN I am old, all things I will endure;  
But now, now, now, while I am young and pure,  
Give me my portion of delight; and so  
    But let me go.

When I am old and tired I shall not care  
How many reveries I must outwear;—  
But to the soul as young as April rain,  
    Less pain, less pain!

Then roses, roses for the fragrant hair,  
And wedding torches for the fingers fair,  
And love, love, love, for the unbroken heart,  
    The perfect heart.

When I am old, o'er leagues of sad unrest  
I shall go softly ;—hiding in my breast  
Some gorgeous dream of youth, until I meet  
The Grey Friend sweet.

## DEATH

*Mater Nostra*

MINE is the kiss of motherhood. Why fear  
The dusky regal splendour of my brows ?  
As some great queen of persecuted house  
With many a lingering yearning kiss and tear  
Confides to lowly arms her princeling dear,  
Until the imperious martial music rouse  
The land to memory of its ancient vows,—  
With Life, thy foster-nurse, I hid thee here.

Now would I wean thee softly from this Past  
That wrongs the erstwhile playmate of the stars ;

Forget those low dim hills, those pale pent  
skies.

Hail! thou hast heired the Infinite at last;  
And kingly pleasures wait thee, kingly wars.—  
Come, gather godhead from my nearer eyes.

## FALLEN

### I.

THE leaves of the lilies are lying  
Low on the soiling ways,  
And the lover-winds denying  
With moans their early praise,  
With tears their early praise,  
O hide their shame  
From the morning flame!—

God gathers all  
At the evenfall.

### II.

The leaves of the soul are lying  
Stained in the underwood,

And the winds o' the world decrying

  Their lost sweet maidenhood,

  Their dreamy maidenhood.

  Hide them away

  From the sun-lit day!—

God gathers all

At the evenfall.

## THREE FATES

### I.

O DREAMER, follow fast the Star  
Adown yon wild green West:  
Within the still green water-world  
They charm your place of rest.

A white mermaiden softly coils  
The linked melody  
Shall draw you down like chains of pearl  
Beneath the lighted sea.

What rumours of Eternity,  
What old old dreams and new!  
With coral and with ambergris  
The couch is flowered for you.

## II.

O Masquer, are you both Love Sleep

Should I kiss your eyelids close?

Yet, as you dance, the good earth-god

Takes thought for your repose.

Somewhere beneath the kindly dust,

Made sweet with thyme and rue,

Under a springing cypress-plant

A bed is made for you.

Dance on, and sin not. But, softly weaned

From sunlight and from dew,

The great sad roses early die

To make thy bed for you.

## III.

O Lover, for the maze of doom

Is thine the golden clue?

Down by the sullen alder-pool

The wood is grown for you.

Across the black and freshening field,

Beneath the bitter blue,

A Sower swings his rhythmic hands,

Hempseed is sown for you.

What matter—if the love of Love

Be coft with all the shame!

By water, land, or giddy air

The sleep is much the same!

## A PRAYER TO DEATH

*For one who suffered too long*

O God's archangel, tarriest thou so late?

Now would we hear the dreamy winnowing,

Now see the dreamy silver of thy wing.

Hark while we pray, life's bondsmen passionate,

—Yon soul with tears and travail satiate,

Softly redeem from long long suffering.

Fierce as this intercession that we bring

His bitter need; and, as thy beauty, great,

O thou who gatherest to thy yearning breast

Young spirits newly wedded with delight,

Let their bright bridal-blossom spol and tail,

Have pity one so prostrate and so pale

With such pain, — must snatch him to his right, —

Evil倾ences, forgotten rest,

“WHOM THE GODS LOVE—DIE  
YOUNG”

I.

How wild were they, at break of day,  
Fulfilled of dream and dew;  
The daisies young they plukt and strung  
Across their robes of blue;  
The glad white feet, through dances sweet  
A silver glory grew.

II.

How soft they sighed ere eventide,  
Fulfilled of Eros' best!  
Each golden head, unfilleted,  
The charm of sleep confest.  
They sprang like flowers; like folding flowers  
God gathered them to rest.

I.

## BODY AND SOUL.

The spirit is a spotless doe that haunts  
The vast, pure woods of God. Thro' her  
domain  
She feels the calm sweet days unsighed wane,  
And white dream-Dryads are her ministrants.  
  
And, thro' the flattered leaves the love-light slants,  
—Till suddenly shricks her softly slumbering pain.  
The hounds o' the flesh are on the trail again,  
And on, on, on, the sobbing quarry pants.  
  
Who is the Hunter that unleashed the pack?  
Was it a god's strange heart the sport designed?  
She only knows He cannot call them back:  
That only to the flaming hour she flies  
When the last shameful agony shall bind  
The accusation of her hunted eyes.

TO THE BOUND CAPTIVE IN THE  
LOUVRE.

I.

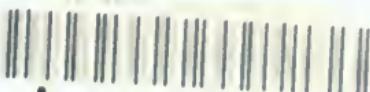
YEA! all the beauty of sorrow, like a crown,  
All sorrow of beauty, like a crown of thorn,  
Genius of dreaming things, by thee is borne!  
Shall not the brooding languors loading down  
The bounden lovely breast, like veils that drown  
The faintly-striving limbs, be sloughed and torn?  
And shall it soon be waking and red morn,  
And plague and fire in delicate Florence town?  
  
O Hylas-beauty, poignant, perilous,  
O luring, yearning curves of throat and chin,  
Wherby is written Love's desire, Love's dread!  
Whose captive art thou? What sarcophagus  
Holds thee its victim, and thy darker Twin,  
Immortals thralled for ever to the Dead.

## II.

Immortal beauty and immortal pain,  
Terror and mystery and dream fulfil  
This archetypal bondsman. Strive thou till  
Thy swoon is rent, thy Passion is all vain,  
And in thy trance thou knowest it is vain.  
Oh! let the drug of dreams, then, work its will.  
The Bondsman and his bonds must marry still,  
The Spirit and the Flesh be one and twain.  
  
See! Interwoven in the fatal knot,  
Confounded as a bridegroom with the bride,  
The beauty of the soul would rend and flee  
The beauty of the body. Ah! let be!  
For God Himself the mortal tangle tied,  
And how to loose He hath Himself forgot.







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